Lizette Woodworth Reese Collection 1848-1930
MS 02

Finding aid prepared by Kristen Romano

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Enoch Pratt Free Library Special Collections
March 2002
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Summary Information

Repository	Enoch Pratt Free Library Special Collections
Title	Lizette Woodworth Reese Collection
Date [inclusive]	1848-1930
Extent	8.0 Linear feet 7 boxes, 18 publications
Language	English
Abstract	Lizette Woodworth Reese was born on January 9, 1856 in Huntingdon (now Waverly), Maryland. Reese was a teacher and accomplished poet. In 1909, Thomas Bird Mosher acquired the rights to Reese's earlier works and had issued them in limited editions. The collection includes materials from 1892-1960, with the bulk of the materials from the 1930s. The collection consists of commemorations and ephemera, Reese's manuscripts and correspondence as well as correspondence about her.

Preferred Citation

Lizette Woodworth Reese Collection, Special Collections, Enoch Pratt Free Library/Maryland's State Library Resource Center.

Biographical

Lizette Woodworth Reese was born on January 9, 1856 in Huntingdon (now Waverly), Maryland. Her father was a soldier in the Confederate army and her mother, born Gabler was a native of Germany. David and Louisa Reese had four daughters, of whom Lizette and Sophia were twins. Educated chiefly in private schools, at seventeen Lizette began her life as a teacher. For three years she taught small children in the parish school of St. John's Episcopal Church in Waverly. Then she was employed in Baltimore public schools, first in one of the English-German schools and then for four years in the high school for African American children. In 1901 she taught English at the Western High School for girls until her retirement in 1921. Reese died December 17, 1935 from complications of a kidney infection.

Although Reese wrote poetry prior to teaching, it was not until she began her career that she actively pursued getting her poems published. Her first published poem, "The Deserted House," was printed in the Baltimore literary periodical, the Southern Magazine, in June 1874. She kept on writing for various weekly and monthly publications and in 1887 issued her first book of verse, A Branch of May, a volume containing thirty-three poems. The little book was favorably received and brought her recognition beyond her own city. In 1891 its contents and additional poems made up a second book, A Handful of Lavender, and by 1896 she published her third book, A Quiet Road. For the next thirteen years, Reese wrote little. This period, however, produced her best-known poem, the sonnet "Tears." It was written in 1899 and published in Scribner's Magazine for November of that year. In 1909 Thomas Bird Mosher, who had acquired the rights to Reese's earlier works and had issued them in limited editions, published a new book of poems entitled A Wayside Lute. In the following years she wrote other works such as Spicewood (1920), Wild Cherry (1923), White April and Other Poems (1930), The York Road (1931), and Pastures and Other Poems (1933).

Reese was an honorary member of Phi Beta Kappa in 1925 and received the degree of doctor of literature from Goucher College in 1931. In 1931, she won the Mary L. Keats Memorial Prize for contributions to literature and she was named Poet Laureate of Maryland. She was a member of the Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore (honorary president 1922-1935) and the Women’s Literary Club of Baltimore (chair of poetry section, 1890-1935).

Scope and Contents

The Lizette Woodworth Reese Collection includes materials from 1892-1960, with the bulk of the materials from the 1930s. In 1936, Lizette Woodworth Reese’s heirs deposited her papers at the Enoch Pratt Free Library. The collection was later supplemented by donations of Reese’s friends, her executor, Warren Wilmer (WW) Brown, and the Lizette Woodworth Reese Memorial Association. In November of 1960, however, Reese’s heirs sold what they had donated to the University of Virginia.

Arrangement

The collection consists of five series.

I. Lizette Woodworth Reese Manuscripts and Correspondence

Series 1 consists of Poems, Writings, and Correspondence. The first two subseries are arranged alphabetically and subseries 3 is arranged chronologically.

II.Correspondence about LWR

This series is divided into two subseries: 1. Correspondence with Reese's executor, WW Brown, 1936-1943 and 2. Correspondence with the Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1936-1960.

III. Commemoration of Lizette Woodworth Reese

The third series consists of speeches, obituaries, newspaper articles, literary magazines, and the commencement of an association to honor Reese. The materials are arranged chronologically. Includes a piece in the Who's Who in America, Volume 18, 1934-1935. The volume was donated by the Lizette Woodworth Reese Memorial Association.

IV. Lizette Woodworth Reese Ephemera

Items included in this series are photographs, a framed poem, Reese's pen and pen-stand, and a book dedicated to Reese, Materna by Harry Lyman Koopman. V.Published Works, 1892- 1936

This series includes books donated to the collection by the Lizette Woodworth Reese Memorial Association and books signed by Reese.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Enoch Pratt Free Library Special Collections March 2002

Revision Description

Finding aid revised by Kristen Romano. July 2009

Conditions Governing Access

Unrestricted, by appointment only.

Accruals

No accruals are expected.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

In 1936 Lizette Woodworth Reese's heirs deposited her papers at the Enoch Pratt Free Library. The collection was later supplemented by donations of Reese's friends, her executor, Warren Wilmer (WW) Brown, and the Lizette Woodworth Reese Memorial Association. In November of 1960, however, Reese's heirs sold what they had donated to the University of Virginia. Reese's friends, WW Brown, and the Memorial Association materials remained and now constitute the Lizette Woodworth Reese Collection at the Pratt Library.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore (Md.).
- Goucher College.
- Lizette Woodworth Reese Memorial Association.
- Mary L. Keats Memorial Prize.
- Phi Beta Kappa.
- Poet Laureate of Maryland.
- Western High School for Girls. (Baltimore, Maryland)

Genre(s)

- Books
- Correspondence
- manuscripts (document genre)
- newspapers
- photographs

Occupation(s)

- High school teachers--Maryland--Baltimore

- Women poets, American

Personal Name(s)

- Reese, Lizette Woodworth, 1856-1935

Subject(s)

- Maryland--Baltimore--Literary club
- Poetry

Collection Inventory

Series I: Lizette Woodworth Reese Manuscripts and Correspondence 1881-1935		
Subseries I: Manuscripts 1881-1935	**Box** 1	**Folder** 1-12
	Box	**Folder**
Manuscript, "All in an April Wood"	1	1
Manuscript, "The Cry"	1	2
Manuscript, "Gorse"	1	3
Manuscript, "The Looking Glass"	1	4
Manuscript, "Old Age"	1	5
Manuscript, "Peach Blossoms"	1	6
Manuscript, "Scarcity"	1	7
Manuscript, "Snow Fall"	1	8
Manuscript, "Tears"	1	9
Manuscript, "Tragedy"	1	10

Manuscript, "Two Sundays Now"	1	11
Manuscript, "Winter"	1	12
Manuscript, unpublished, untitled	1	12-1
Subseries II: Writings 1881-1935	**Box** 1	**Folder** 13-15
	Box	**Folder**
LWR Autographs	1	13
List of names in Reese's handwriting	1	13-1
Materials found in Pastures	1	14
Miscellaneous Writings-LWR	1	15
Subseries III: Correspondence 1919-1935	**Box** 1	**Folder** 16-20
	Box	**Folder**
Correspondence with Hester [Dorsey Richardson], 1896	1	16
Correspondence with Mrs. Lawrence Turnball, 1919	1	16
Correspondence with Dr. Gould, 1915	1	16-1
Correspondence with Woodworth Literary club, 1922	1	17

Correspondence with Carolyn Brown, 1922	1	17-1
Correspondence with WW Brown, 1925-1935	1	18
Correspondence wtih Mrs. Ober(?), 1926	1	18-1
Correspondence with Amy L. Steiner, 1927	1	18-2
Correspondence with Paul Davis Bell, 1929-1930	1	19
Correspondence with Fannie Hess, 1931-1934	1	19-1
Correspondence with Walter Knipp, 1931	1	19-2
Correspondence with Grace Turnball, 1931-1934	1	20
Correspondence wtih Mr. J. L. Wheeler, 1933 and 1935	1	20-1
Series II: Correspondence about Lizette Woodworth Reese 1936-1960	**Box** 1-2	**Folder** 21-43
Subseries I: Correspondence with WW Brown 1936-1943	**Box** 1-2	**Folder** 21-32
	Box	**Folder**
WW Brown with J. D. Clark, 1936	1	21
WW Brown with Mrs. Croker, 1936	1	22
WW Brown with George Derby, 1936	1	23

WW Brown with EPFL, 1936-1943	1	24
WW Brown with Goucher College, 1936	1	25
WW Brown with Johns Hopkins University, 1936	1	26
WW Brown with LWR Foundation, 1936-1937	1	27
WW Brown with H. L. Mencken, 1936	1	28
WW Brown with New York Public Library, 1936	2	29
WW Brown with Walter Sondheim, 1936	2	30
WW Brown with C. Sutherland, 1936	2	31
WW Brown's Request for Reese Memories, 1936	2	32
Subseries II: Correspondence from Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1936-1960	**Box** 2	**Folder** 34-43
	Box	**Folder**
EPFL, January-May 1936	2	34
EPFL, June-December 1936	2	35
EPFL, 1937	2	36

EPFL, 1938	2	37
EPFL, 1939	2	38
EPFL, 1940	2	39
EPFL, 1943	2	40
EPFL, 1944	2	41
EPFL, 1947	2	42
EPFL, 1960	2	43

Series III: Commemoration of Lizette Woodworth Reese 1935-1949	**Box** 2	**Folder** 44-47
	Box	**Folder**
Photocopies of news clippings about LWR, 1935-1943	2	44
Speeches about LWR, 1938-47	2	45
LWR Memorial Association Donated Copies of The Lyric, 1923 and 1935	2	46
LWR Memorial Association Materials, 1939-49	2	47
Enoch Pratt Free Library Tribute Pamphlet -Transcription of the ceremonies held for the unveiling of the LWR tablet on May 2, 1943	2	47-1

Series IV: Lizette Woodworth Reese Ephemera 1928-1943		
	Box	**Folder**
Photographs of LWR	3	48-55
Framed etching by Edwin Tunis (1928) #5 of 50	3	56
		Box
Framed poem, “Apples Dropping”		4
Reese's pen and pen-stand		5
An Index to the poems of Lizette Woodworth Reese, Compiled by Ruth Murray Klein 1943		6
Series V: Published Works by Lizette Woodworth Reese 1887-1939 51.0 Volumes		**Shelf** G 3
A Branch of May (1909)- 4 copies		
A Handful of Lavender (1892 and 1915)- 3 copies		
A Quiet Road (1896 and 1915)- 3 copies, 1 signed		
A Victorian Village (1929)- 1 copy with a poem entitled “April” penned by Reese on one of the title pages		
A Victorian Village (1939)- 3copies, 2 signed		

A Wayside Suite (1919)- 4 copies, 2 signed

Contributions to Gardens, Houses, and People, 1930-1936

Little Henrietta (1927)- 5 copies, 2 signed

Pastures and Other Poems (1933)- 2 copies, 1 signed

Poems (1887)- 3 copies, signed

Singing Pathways (1929)- 1 copy, signed

Spicewood (1921)- 3 copies, 1 signed

The Old House in the Country (1936)- 2 copies (housed with Worleys)

The Selected Poems of Lizette Woodworth Reese (1926)- 1 copy

The York Road (1931)- 3 copies, 1 signed

White April (1930)- 2 copies, 1 signed

Wild Cherry (1923)- 5 copies, 2 autographed

Worleys (1936)- 2 copies